



New Bedford Public Schools Innovation Schools Request for Proposals/Prospectus March 2012

New Bedford Public Schools is pleased to announce that we are accepting proposals/prospectus for Innovation Schools. This new school model, included as part of education reform legislation passed in Massachusetts, is designed to improve school performance and student achievement through increased autonomy and flexibility. In an effort to have our schools provide the very best for students and to be on the forefront of innovation in education, the New Bedford School Committee voted in February of 2012 to solicit proposals/prospectus based on recommendations from the Working Group, made up of representatives from the School Committee, School Department, a representative from the Community Foundation, and members of the community-based United Interfaith Action (UIA).

If a school community has a vision of how to better serve students as an Innovation School, they can propose a conversion model of their current school as well as a start-up school. The District is prepared to add up to two Innovation Schools in September 2013. The Innovation School model presupposes that the increased flexibility over governance, curriculum, staffing, budget, schedule/calendar, and professional development that comes with this model may allow a school team to better meet the unique needs of their students. We encourage staff, families, community members or partners to submit a proposal for an Innovation School.

Below you will find the Request for Proposals/Prospectus (RFP) that contains the detailed criteria that will be used to evaluate all proposals. You will also find pertinent information regarding the proposal process and timelines. The proposals will go through a rigorous evaluation process and each one will be evaluated based on academic, financial, and operational criteria.

Proposals/Prospectus must be submitted to Dr. Mary Louise Francis at New Bedford Public Schools by 4:00 P.M. on or before Friday, June 15, 2012. However, a group may submit at any time for implementation effective 2014-2015. Thank you for your continued commitment to the students of New Bedford. We look forward to reviewing your proposals.

Sincerely,

Dr. Mary Louise Francis
Superintendent

Guidelines for Small, Autonomous Schools Proposals/Prospectus

Based on the recommendations of United Interfaith Action's Small, Autonomous Schools Working Group, the New Bedford School Committee approved the following principles, guidelines, and implementation plan for launching small, autonomous schools with the New Bedford School District.

1. Principles for Small, Autonomous Schools in the New Bedford Public Schools

The following principles should be used in all aspects of launching new small, autonomous schools in the New Bedford Public Schools:

- a) The New Bedford Public Schools will create small, autonomous schools in which:
 - There is a unifying vision and mission that guides the school's decisions
 - Everyone – students, parents, and teachers – is valued and included
 - Students are held to high academic expectations, provided with a rigorous curriculum, and supported to be academically successful
 - Students are held to high expectations for behavior and conduct, with support provided to help students attain these high standards
 - Parents are welcomed and engaged in multiple roles inside and outside the school
 - Teachers maintain their union status, salaries, benefits, and accrual of seniority within the district.
- b) The roll-out of small, autonomous schools is intended to provide parents and students with increased choice of quality schools within a district that values diversity of educational options.
- c) Student assignment to small, autonomous schools will be conducted in an equitable manner that enrolls a student population that is reflective of the overall NBPS student demographics (i.e., by race, income, gender, language, and disability).
- d) Budgeting for small, autonomous schools will be as close to cost-neutral as possible (as with all innovations introduced within a district, there may be some small start-up costs). Budgeting will be transparent and equitable to other NBPS schools within the same grade span.
- e) The timing for launching small, autonomous schools will enable adequate preparation at both the central office and school levels so as to maximize their success.
- f) The roll-out of small, autonomous schools will be conducted in such a manner that it identifies and promotes effective practices that improve student outcomes throughout all district schools.
- g) All small, autonomous schools will be expected to perform at high levels. The success of each small, autonomous school will be tracked annually, with a comprehensive review occurring every 4-5 years to assess the school's effectiveness and determine its future.

2. Guidelines for Launching Small, Autonomous Schools in New Bedford Public Schools

These guidelines are intended to provide guidance to prospective design teams to signal the type of small, autonomous schools that the district is interested in approving.

Guideline #1: Adopt the Innovation School Model to Launch Small, Autonomous Schools

The Innovation School model's benefits are as follows: (1) it is a high profile model that is a priority of the Governor and Executive Office of Education (EOE), (2) the process to become an Innovation School is locally controlled, and (3) there could be limited planning and implementation grants available for Innovation Schools that are approved.

Guideline #2: Launch Two Innovation Schools in September 2013

The district needs to indicate its commitment to create in-district schools with autonomy that can attract parents to keep their children enrolled in the district. Additional schools may be considered in future years as high-quality proposals are submitted.

Guideline #3: Encourage Each School to Consider the Full Set of Autonomies

The Innovation School autonomies – budget, staffing, curriculum & assessment, professional development, district policy, and school calendar – are all highly interdependent.

Guideline #4: Encourage Innovation Schools to Start across the PreK-12 Spectrum, with an Emphasis on the Middle Grades

Models of high performing innovative schools are needed across the entire grade span, PreK-12. In particular, NBPS needs to promote innovative models of learning in the middle grades.

Guideline #5: Encourage Conversion, Start-Up, and Restart Innovation Schools

Conversion schools are when the faculty of an existing school develops a proposal to become an Innovation School. A Start-up school is a new school that is proposed by a design team. A Restart school is when an existing Level 4 underperforming school is closed, and the facility is reopened as a new Innovation School in the following September. Due to district budget constraints, start-up schools should be opened within existing city-owned facilities.

Guideline #6: Ensure that Innovation Schools Are Small and Personalized

Small schools are more successful at creating personalized and engaging learning environments. All NBPS Innovation Schools have the following maximum enrollment - 425 students for K-8, 6-12, and 9-12 schools; and 325 students for K-5 and 6-8 schools

Guideline #7: Encourage Applicants to Request a Full Scope of Budget Autonomy

Prospective design teams should be encouraged to request the following four provisions of budget autonomy – lump sum budget, weighted student formula, spending by actual salaries, and choice over central discretionary services.

Guideline #8: Due to Transportation Costs, Innovation Schools Should Service the Neighborhood Families Assigned to the Facility in Which the School Will Reside

At the high school level, an Innovation high school should reside within the current New Bedford High School facility or within a higher education or cultural institution.

3. Implementation Plan

Following are guidelines and a timeline to assist the implementation of new Innovation Schools:

- a. **Innovation Schools Steering Committee.** Upon approval of a plan to launch Innovation Schools, the district will create an Innovation Schools Steering Committee. This body will be charged with overseeing early implementation of Innovation Schools. (Note that Innovation Schools legislation and regulations govern the selection and approval process for Innovation Schools.) This Steering Committee will consist of the Superintendent designee, and any other key central office managers; the President designee of the New Bedford Education Association; four members of the Working Group; and representatives of other key community, business, and/or higher education institutions. The Steering Committee will ensure that the Innovation Schools' timeline is followed and all activities take place.
- b. **Executive Office of Education (EOE) Innovation School Templates.** EOE has developed a template for both phases of the Innovation School proposal process – the initial Prospectus and the final proposed Plan. The district should adopt this template for use, amending it by including the principles and guidelines in this document.
- c. **Selection Process and Timeline.** The following process and timeline will be used to select the first two Innovation Schools, to be launched in September 2013. Submitted Prospectus and Plans that do not follow this timeline will be considered for start-up in future years:

Date	Activity
March 2012	NBPS Innovation Schools Prospectus and Plan template is released
March & April 2012	Innovation Schools information session(s) are conducted around the city for prospective design teams
May 2, 2012	Letters of intent are due to NBPS from prospective design teams
March - April	Assistance given to prospective design teams by the Executive Office of Education in formulating their ideas into a Prospectus
June 15	Prospectus are due to NBPS
July 15	The Superintendent, School Committee Chairperson, and New Bedford Education Association President or designees must convene and vote to approve or reject each Prospectus (by two-thirds vote)
July – November 15	Assistance provided to design teams by the Executive Office of Education with an approved Prospectus to develop their full Innovation Schools Plan
November 15	All Innovation Schools Plans for September 2013 launch are due to NBPS
December 15	School Committee determines by majority vote on whether to approve submitted Innovation School Plans
January – August 2013	Approved Innovation Schools plan for launch in September 2013

- d. **Accountability Plan.** An accountability plan should be developed in which the district tracks the annual progress of each Innovation School, and undertakes a comprehensive school quality review of each school's practices, culture, and outcomes every five years, leading to a School Committee decision on renewal of the school's Innovation status.

**New Bedford Public Schools
Request for Proposals/Prospectus (RFP)
for Innovation Schools**

March, 2012

NBPS is pleased to announce a request for proposals/prospectus for Innovation Schools to open in Fall 2013. This RFP outlines the requirements and evaluation criteria for interested groups to submit a prospectus. Interested groups must submit a prospectus by 4:00 PM on Tuesday, June 15, 2012 to Dr. Mary Louise Francis, Superintendent. We look forward to working with you to create new opportunities for New Bedford students.

1) Prospectus Requirements:

The first step to create an Innovation School is to submit a prospectus to NBPS. The prospectus must follow the DESE template, including the Innovation School Information Sheet as per below.

The prospectus must include the following elements required, by the DESE:

"The prospectus must include, but is not limited to, a description of:

- (i) whether the school will be a new school or a conversion of an existing school;
- (ii) if the school is a new school, the proposed location of the school;
- (iii) if the school is a conversion of an existing school, the school that is being proposed for conversion;
- (iv) the external partners, if any, that will be involved in the school;
- (v) the number of students the school is anticipated to serve and the number of staff expected to be employed at the school;
- (vi) the overall vision for the school, including improving school performance and student achievement;
- (vii) specific needs or challenges the school will be designed to address;
- (viii) a preliminary assessment of the autonomy and flexibility under subsection (b) that the school will seek;
- (ix) why the flexibility described under (viii) (above) is desirable to carry out the objectives of the school;
- (x) anticipated components of the school's innovation plan;
- (xi) a preliminary description of the process that will be used to involve appropriate stakeholders in the development of the innovation plan; and
- (xii) a proposed timetable for development and establishment of the proposed school. "

In addition, each prospectus must include a section that explains how this proposal will help NBPS to achieve its goals and academic target areas.

Page Limits: Applicant groups should limit their prospectus to approximately 10 pages, excluding the Innovation School information Sheet and any attachments. Applicants may provide more detailed information in the full Innovation Plan, if the prospectus is approved.

2) NBPS Evaluation Criteria:

NBPS has identified several conditions required for a prospectus to be approved:

- *Budget-neutral.* Innovation Schools, like all other NBPS schools, will be funded according to our weighted student funding formula. Proposed Innovation Schools should be budget neutral.
- *Focus on quality.* NBPS plans to focus on a few, high-quality proposals, to ensure that we are able to support the development of a strong final plan. We anticipate approving no more than two (2) prospectus in this round.
- *Access.* Innovation school enrollment should reflect the demographics of the district's student body. Schools should not propose selective admissions processes.

NBPS will evaluate each prospectus based on the following criteria:

Each prospectus must explain how this proposal will help NBPS to achieve the following goals:

- Ensure all students achieve MCAS proficiency
- Close access and achievement gaps
- Graduate all students from high school prepared for college and career success

Each prospectus will be reviewed based on the DESE criteria:

- Presents a sound and coherent plan for improving school performance and student achievement
- Reasonably can be expanded into a comprehensive innovation plan

In addition, NBPS will prioritize schools where:

- There is demonstrated faculty support of the prospectus (indicated by number and percent of teachers who are listed as helping to develop the prospectus)
- Evidence is provided that the entire faculty and broader school community have been engaged in development of the prospectus. Prospectus should also include a plan for future community and stakeholder engagement efforts.

3. Financial and Operational Feasibility

Given NBPS' financial constraints, please make sure that your prospectus for an Innovation model is budget neutral.

3) Review Process and Timeline:

1) Due Date

Letters of intent are due to NBPS from prospective design teams by April 2, 2012.

Interested groups must submit a Innovation School prospectus by 4:00 PM on Tuesday, June 15, 2012 to Dr. Mary Louise Francis, Superintendent. Each prospectus must be in a PDF or .doc format. Prospectus submitted after the deadline will not be considered. Following approval of a prospectus, all Innovation Schools plans for a September 2013 launch are due to NBPS on November 15, 2012.

2) Review Process

The Superintendent will convene a screening committee to review each prospectus. *The Superintendent, School Committee Chairperson or designee, and New Bedford Education Association President or designee will convene and vote to approve or reject each Prospectus (by two-thirds vote) by June 15, 2012. Following a period of plan development, the School Committee will determine by majority vote whether to approve submitted Innovation School Plans. Following the School Committee's decision(s), announcements will be made by December 15, 2012.

*As required by the state law, the screening committee must be comprised of "(i) the Superintendent or his designee; (ii) school committee member or a designee selected by the school committee; and (iii) representative of leadership from the local teachers' union."

For more information on innovation Schools, please visit the DESE website at www.mass.gov/edu/innovationschools. For more information about the NBPS process, please visit the NBPS website <http://www.newbedfordschools.org> or contact the Superintendent's Office at 508-997-4511 ext. 3294.

INNOVATION SCHOOL PROSPECTUS AND INNOVATION PLAN TEMPLATE

INNOVATION SCHOOLS PROPOSALS AND INNOVATION PLAN SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

As specified by state law, there is a two-stage approval process for each Innovation School. A **prospectus** must be approved by a three-person screening committee, and then a more detailed **innovation plan [IP]** must be developed by an innovation plan committee and then approved by teachers (in the case of conversions) and the local school committee.

This document outlines the requirements for both stages. *Note that elements preceded by **IP** do not have to be addressed until the innovation plan stage.

<p>Format and Submission Requirements</p>	<p>Both the prospectus and innovation plan must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be prepared on plain, 8 ½ x 11" size paper that is suitable for reproduction. • Contain one-inch margins • Use 11-point font, or larger • Include a Table of Contents that includes attachments • Include page numbers in the bottom right hand corner of each page, including attachments <p>The prospectus is usually 10-30 pages of text, excluding required attachments.</p> <p>The innovation plan is limited to 50 pages of text, excluding required attachments.</p> <p><i>At each stage submit to district Superintendent:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One (1) bound or stapled original copy, • One (1) unbound copy suitable for photocopying, and • An electronic copy of the prospectus.
<p>Where to Mail and/or Drop-off Prospectuses</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Superintendent's Office New Bedford Public Schools 455 County St. New Bedford, Massachusetts 02740</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Please Note: All documents submitted become a part of the public record.</i></p>

INNOVATION SCHOOL INFORMATION FORM

This sheet must be included in all prospectus submissions.

Proposed Innovation School Name:	
Full/Partial Conversion or New:	
Proposed School Address (if known):	
Primary Contact Name:	
Primary Contact Phone Number(s) :	
Primary Contact Fax Number(s) :	
Primary Contact Email Address:	

If conversion:

Existing School Name:	
Existing School Address:	

Proposed Innovation School opening school year: ☒ 2013-2014 ☐ 2014-2015
 Proposed duration of innovation plan (up to five years): ☐ 3 years ☐ 4 years ☐ 5 years

School Year	Grade Levels	Total Student Enrollment	Total number of Staff
First Year			
Second Year			
Third Year			
Fourth Year			
Fifth Year			
...			
At Full Enrollment			

Will this school serve students from multiple districts? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, list the towns/cities in the proposed regions.

N/A _____

If yes, list the school districts (including regional school districts) in the proposed region. (Use additional sheets if necessary):

N/A _____

Please list autonomies and flexibilities to be requested with a brief description (no more than a paragraph) of each.

*(Detailed explanation is to be included in Innovation School Plan, but is **not required** at the Innovation Prospectus stage.)*

☐ Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment:

☐ Budget

☐ Schedule and Calendar

☐ Staffing

☐ Professional Development

☐ District Policies and Procedures

INNOVATION SCHOOL PROSPECTUS CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Proposed Innovation School Name:	
Proposed City/Town Location:	

I hereby certify that the information submitted in this prospectus is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature of Lead Applicant _____ Date _____

Lead Applicant Information	
Print/Type Name:	
Address:	
Phone Number:	
Fax Number:	
Email Address:	

INNOVATION PLAN CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

(Not required at the Innovation Prospectus stage)

Proposed Innovation School Name:	
Proposed City/Town Location:	New Bedford

Names of innovation plan committee members (no more than 11 individuals) selected in accordance with state law:

Affiliation	Name	Vote to approve innovation plan
Lead applicant member:		
Superintendent or designee:		
School committee member or designee:		
Parent who has one or more children enrolled in the school, or in the case of a new school, in the district:		
Teacher employed by district (selected from among volunteers)		
Teacher employed by district (selected from among nominees submitted by the local teacher's union:		
Member:		
Member:		
Member:		
Member:		
Member:		

I hereby certify that the information submitted in this innovation plan is true to the best of our knowledge and belief and has been approved by a majority vote of the innovation plan committee.

Signature of Lead Applicant Member _____ Date _____

PROSPECTUS AND INNOVATION PLAN OUTLINE

- ☐ Cover Page
- ☐ Information Form
- ☐ Certification Statement
- ☐ Executive Summary – no more than two pages
Summarize the proposed school's mission and educational program, the community's need for this school, and the applicant group's capacity to make the school a success.
- ☐ Public Statement
Include a statement of 100 words or less summarizing your proposed school. This statement will be shared with the media. Please be sure to include the school's proposed location, projected grade span, projected enrollment, and districts served.
- ☐ I. Innovation School Mission, Vision, and Statement of Need
 - ☐ A. Mission Statement
 - ☐ B. Vision Statement
 - ☐ C. Statement of Need
 - ☐ D. Proposed Partnership(s)
- ☐ II. How Will Autonomy and Flexibility Be Used?
 - ☐ A. Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
 - ☐ B. Schedule and Calendar
 - ☐ C. Staffing Policies and Procedures
 - ☐ D. Professional Development
 - ☐ E. District Policies and Procedures
 - ☐ F. Budget
- ☐ III. Capacity of Applicant Group
- ☐ IV. Proposed Timetable for Development and Establishment of the Innovation School
- ☐ V. IP: Measurable Annual Goals (***Not required at the Innovation Prospectus stage.***)
- ☐ VI. Required Attachments
 - ☐ Statements of commitment and resumes from each applicant group member.
 - ☐ School Improvement Plan, for conversion schools

I. MISSION, VISION, STATEMENT OF NEED, AND PROPOSED PARTNER

A. Mission Statement

The mission statement defines the core purpose and key values of the school and informs the public about the students the school intends to serve. It should be consistent with high academic standards and be succinct, meaningful, and measurable. A school's mission statement provides the foundation for the entire prospectus and for the up-to-five-year term of the school's innovation plan. Therefore, the mission statement should be reflected throughout all sections of the prospectus.

Provide the mission statement. The mission statement should:

- ✓ Speak to the value of the proposed school, based on its own merit.
- ✓ Inform the public about the students the Innovation School intends to serve.
- ✓ Be consistent with high academic standards and student success.
- ✓ Be succinct and meaningful.
- ✓ Be reflected throughout all sections of the prospectus.

B. Vision Statement

A vision statement should provide readers with an image of the future the applicant group wishes to create. The vision statement should articulate what the school will achieve for the community – students, parents, teachers, board members, and beyond. An effective vision statement aligns with the mission statement and is meaningful and measurable. It also serves as a vivid organizing principle that helps all stakeholders focus on the desired targeted outcomes.

Provide the vision statement. The vision statement should:

- ✓ Illustrate a compelling image of the school's future.
- ✓ Describe the ways in which the school will positively impact all stakeholders in the school.
- ✓ Align with the mission statement.
- ✓ Be meaningful.
- ✓ Serve as an organizing principle for all sections of the prospectus.

In addition, please describe a day in the life of a student and teacher in the school once the innovation plan is in place.

C. Statement of Need

Innovation Schools are to be established for the purpose of improving school performance and student achievement by utilizing increased autonomy and flexibility. An Innovation School may be established as a new public school or as a conversion (full or partial) of an existing public school. An Innovation School may be operated primarily by school faculty and leadership or in collaboration with one or more external partners.

When providing the school's statement of need, applicant groups should:

- ✓ Speak to why this Innovation School is needed in the proposed district(s).
- ✓ Describe the student population the school will serve and the needs of this population.
- ✓ Describe the specific issues, challenges, or needs that can be addressed or improved by establishing an Innovation School.
- ✓ Explain generally why the autonomy and flexibility provided by an Innovation School is necessary in order to carry out the objectives of the school.
- ✓ Include any evidence or information available on staff, teacher, parent, and/or community interest in the establishment of the proposed Innovation School.
- ✓ *For conversions:* Provide an analysis of the external and internal factors or needs that moved the applicant group to propose an Innovation School.
- ✓ *For conversions:* Describe what the applicant group perceives as barriers presented by the current school structure or roadblocks to successful implementation of the current school improvement plan that would require Innovation status to address.
- ✓ *For conversions:* Describe specific areas of the current school improvement plan – with a focus on student achievement – that would be addressed by increased autonomy with respect to curriculum, budget, school schedule and calendar, staffing, and district policies.

D. Primary Proposed Partnership(s), if applicable

- ✓ Identify the proposed external partner(s) that will be primarily responsible for developing the innovation plan under which the school will operate and in which the external partner(s) are responsible for meeting the terms of the performance contract, and explain why the partner(s) were chosen.
- ✓ Describe the nature of the proposed partnership(s) that will serve as the foundation of the Innovation School and why such a partnership is necessary to achieve the mission of the school.
- ✓ Provide evidence of the capacity of the partner to develop and operate the proposed Innovation School.

- ✓ Include specific information about the types of services and/or activities that will be provided by the partner.

II. HOW WILL AUTONOMY AND FLEXIBILITY BE USED TO IMPROVE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT?

A. Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Innovation Schools have the freedom to choose and/or develop curriculum models that best reflect the mission and educational philosophy of the school and that best serve the needs of the expected student population. Regardless of whether the curriculum is purchased or internally developed, it is important that it aligns with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (MCF) since Massachusetts Comprehensive Accountability System (MCAS) tests are based on the learning standards outlined in the MCF, which include the new Common Core Standards (CCS). Additional information about the MCF and CCS can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/> and <http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/commoncore/>. Secondary schools are also advised to coordinate curriculum and course decisions with the recommended Massachusetts High School Program of Studies (MassCore). Additional information about MassCore can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/hsreform/masscore/>. Innovation Schools also have the freedom to determine the instructional methods that will be used to deliver the chosen curriculum model(s), as well as the local assessments used to track student progress and inform instruction.

When describing how the school will use curricular autonomy, applicant groups should:

- ✓ Describe the school's instructional and student assessment philosophy and how this aligns with the school's mission.
- ✓ Discuss any special academic/curricular themes the Innovation School will feature, if any.
- ✓ Generally describe the curriculum, instructional methods, and assessments that will be used by the school.
 - If this differs from the district's current curriculum, instructional methods, or assessments, explain why a change is necessary.
 - *For conversions*, explain how the chosen curriculum, instructional program, and assessments differ from the school's current practice and why changes are necessary.
- ✓ Describe the implementation of the educational program in terms of the daily or weekly organization of students and faculty groupings (e.g., multi-grade, tracking, team-teaching, etc.). and target class sizes and teacher-student loads.
- ✓ Describe the school's approach to literacy and numeracy instruction for diverse learners.
- ✓ Describe how the curriculum will address the needs of English language learners, and students with special needs.
- ✓ Describe your proposed plan to assess student performance beyond MCAS. What formative and summative measures will you use to determine student progress and success?

- If this differs from the district's current curriculum, instructional methods, or assessments, explain why a change is necessary.
- *For conversions*, explain how the chosen curriculum, instructional program, and assessments differ from the school's current practice and why changes are necessary.
- ✓ **IP:** Describe the proposed exit or graduation requirements and how the school will measure student progress to determine whether they are ready for graduation. (***Not required at the Innovation Prospectus stage.***)
- ✓ **IP:** Describe how the chosen curriculum, instructional methods, and assessments are expected to improve school performance and student achievement and are necessary for the school to achieve its mission. (***Not required at the Innovation Prospectus stage.***)

B. Schedule and Calendar

Innovation Schools have the freedom to set their own school schedule and calendar for both staff and students, with the goal of maximizing quality instruction for students and professional development for staff.

When describing how the school will use school schedule and calendar autonomy, applicant groups should:

- ✓ Describe the school calendar and daily/weekly schedule for students and how the program or calendar is enhanced and/or expanded. Include the number of days school will be in session, the daily hours of operation, and the way the school will be organized for instruction, independent study, and extra or co-curricular activities. Please be specific in describing these items and refer to the state requirements on minimum number of school days and instructional hours as described in 603 CMR 27.00, available online at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr27.html>.
- ✓ Describe the calendar and daily/weekly schedule for staff, and how time will be used to maximize professional development and collaborative planning time focused on instruction and student learning.
- ✓ Provide reasons for why the proposed school calendar and schedule are necessary for the school to achieve its mission.
- ✓ *For conversions:* Describe how the proposed school calendar and schedule differs from the school's current calendar and schedule and why changes are being made.
- ✓ **IP:** Specifically identify collective bargaining provisions related to schedule and calendar that are proposed to be waived or modified. (***Not required at the Innovation Prospectus stage.***)

C. Staffing

Innovation Schools have the freedom to set their own staffing policies and procedures through waivers or exemptions from district policies, contracts or collective bargaining agreements (approval by two-thirds of the current teachers is required for conversion schools, and negotiation of waivers or modifications to the collective bargaining agreement is required for new schools).

When describing how the school will use autonomy over staffing policies and procedures, applicant groups should:

- ✓ Provide a staffing chart and narrative staffing plan which includes a description of the leadership structure.
- ✓ Describe how the proposed staffing pattern and job descriptions/roles will differ from the traditional district patterns and how the staffing pattern will ensure adequate instruction and services to special education and English language learners.
- ✓ Provide reasons for why the proposed staffing structure is necessary for the school to achieve its mission.
- ✓ *For conversions:* Explain how this staffing plan differs from the school's current structure and why these changes are necessary.
- ✓ Describe the school's working conditions for administration and staff, and the general areas in which working conditions will diverge from district policies or collective bargaining agreements, including collaborative planning time for faculty.
- ✓ Describe the process by which the school will annually determine the working conditions for staff.
- ✓ Describe how the decision-making process will ensure broad staff support for the working conditions that are determined.
- ✓ **IP:** Describe how the school principal, administrators, faculty, and staff will be recruited, employed, evaluated and compensated in the proposed school and any proposed waivers or modifications of district policies or collective bargaining agreements. (***Not required at the Innovation Prospectus stage.***)
- ✓ **IP:** Specifically identify provisions for which working conditions will diverge from collective bargaining agreements. Be sure to note whether the school will hire staff regardless of their current status and how the school will deal with excessing staff (into the district pool) that do not fulfill the needs of the school. (***Not required at the Innovation Prospectus stage.***)
- ✓ **IP:** Describe how the approved working conditions will be communicated to all current and prospective staff in a manner that ensures understanding and commitment by all staff within the school. (***Not required at the Innovation Prospectus stage.***)

D. Professional Development

Innovation Schools have the freedom to create their own professional development plans according to the needs of the students, staff, and faculty of the school.

When describing how the school will use autonomy related to professional development, applicant groups should:

- ✓ **IP:** Describe the school's plan to provide high-quality professional development and support/resources to its administrators, teachers and staff to assist in the implementation of new curriculum, instructional methods, assessments, and other programmatic structures.
- ✓ **IP:** *For conversions*, explain how plans for professional development differ from the school's current practice (or district requirements) and why these changes are necessary.

E. District Policies and Procedures

Innovation Schools have the freedom to set their own unique policies and procedures that are different from those of the district.

When describing how the school will use autonomy related to district policies and procedures, applicant groups should:

- ✓ Describe the school's proposed governance and decision-making structure.
- ✓ Describe the process by which decisions about major policies, programs, and budget will be made and how staff and parents will be involved.
- ✓ *For conversions:* Explain how the proposed governance structure differs from the school's current structure and why the changes are necessary.
- ✓ Provide reasons for why the proposed governance and decision-making structure is necessary for the school to achieve its mission.
- ✓ Identify any other areas in which the school will seek flexibility and autonomy from the district, including but not limited to:
 - Enrollment process
 - Homework policy
 - Code of conduct
 - Parental involvement
 - Principal selection and evaluation
 - Teacher supervision/support
 - Promotion/graduation standards
- ✓ For each area, provide an outline of the policy or procedure and reasons why flexibility from district is necessary for the school to achieve its mission.

- ✓ *For conversions:* For each proposed policy or procedure change, explain the differences from the school's current practice and why the changes are necessary.
- ✓ **IP:** Provide a draft of the particular policy or procedure for which autonomy from the district is proposed. (***Not required at the Innovation Prospectus stage.***)
- ✓ **IP:** Provide an organizational chart. (***Not required at the Innovation Prospectus stage.***)
- ✓ **IP:** Describe the role of the school council as it relates to governance and the decision-making process. (***Not required at the Innovation Prospectus stage.***)

F. Budget

Innovation Schools are intended to be a fiscally-neutral reform option. At the present time, no additional ongoing operational funds will be available to an Innovation School, but the school will have increased flexibility and autonomy over the use of the funds allocated to the school by the district. For each school year, Innovation Schools will receive the same per pupil allocation as any other school in the district. Additionally, Innovation Schools may choose district discretionary services (e.g., district instructional coaches, textbooks, district professional development) or receive the equivalent per pupil funds added to their school allocation.

When describing how the school will use budget autonomy, applicant groups should:

- ✓ Identify specific priority areas (staffing, services, etc.) that the school proposes to direct funds to, how this may differ from traditional school spending structures in the district (e.g., describe whether teachers will be paid differently or if contracted services will be utilized to provide certain services.)
- ✓ Provide reasons for why these budget priority areas are necessary for the school to achieve its mission.
- ✓ *For conversions:* Identify specific priority areas (staffing, services, etc.) that the school proposes to redirect funds to, specific areas it will de-prioritize, and why these changes are necessary.
- ✓ **IP:** Explain the proposed financial arrangement with the local district that ensures the Innovation School's autonomy over its operations and ensures that the school receives district funds equitably. (***Not required at the Innovation Prospectus stage.***) Please be sure to discuss the following:
 - How funds will be allocated to the Innovation School (e.g., weighted lump sum per-pupil formula).
 - If and how the Innovation School will be able to access central district services (e.g., district instructional coaches, textbooks, professional development) in exchange for an equivalent adjustment in the funding they receive from the district.
 - How the Innovation School will access funds and procure goods and services. (***Not required at the Innovation Prospectus stage.***)

- ✓ **IP:** Provide a three-year school-level budget which includes a detailed description of how funds will be used differently in the school to support school performance and student achievement. (***Not required at the Innovation Prospectus stage.***)

III. CAPACITY OF APPLICANT GROUP

Along with operational autonomy and flexibility, Innovation Schools take on additional responsibilities for stewardship of public funds. It is important that individuals proposing to start an Innovation School possess a wide variety of skills and qualifications that will enable them to develop and sustain a high performing school. Members of an applicant group may eventually work at, oversee, advise, or govern the proposed Innovation School.

When describing the capacity of the applicant group, applicant groups should:

- ✓ Describe briefly how the applicant group or design team that came together to develop this proposal and why the group is united to establish the proposed Innovation School.
- ✓ Identify the primary author(s) of the proposal.
- ✓ Summarize each member of the applicant group's experience and qualifications briefly within the text of the document. The experience and qualifications should demonstrate that the applicant group and/or proposed leadership of the school:
 - Have experience and qualifications necessary to implement the proposal;
 - Demonstrate the capacity to found and sustain a high performing Innovation School;
 - Can manage public funds effectively and responsibly;
 - Include members who possess skills and experience in areas such as education, management, finance, development and law; and
 - Have tangible ties to, and broad and diverse representation from the community(ies) the school will serve.

Note: Please attach a statement of commitment and resume for each applicant group member and specify whether the individual is proposed to be a board member, school leader, or to hold any other positions at the school. (Statements of commitment and resumes in the attachments are not counted toward the page limit.)

- ✓ If the applicant group includes the proposed school leader(s) (or any other position at the school), indicate the process used to determine that the individual(s) is the best candidate for the position and why s/he has the capacity to effectively utilize additional autonomy.
- ✓ *For conversions:* Describe the school's preparedness and capacity to convert into an Innovation School.
- ✓ **IP:** Describe the planning process utilized by the innovation plan committee to develop the proposal. (***Not required at the Innovation Prospectus stage.***)
- ✓ **IP:** Attach letters of support from key partner organizations (these attachments are not counted toward the page limit). (***Not required at the Innovation Prospectus stage.***)

IV. TIMETABLE FOR DEVELOPMENT AND ESTABLISHMENT

It is important that the applicant team have a thorough plan for the development and establishment of the proposed Innovation School once approved.

When describing the timetable for the development and establishment of the proposed Innovation School, applicant groups should:

- ✓ Provide a description of the process that will be or has been used to involve appropriate stakeholders in the development of the innovation plan
- ✓ Articulate a proposed timetable for the development and establishment of the Innovation School. Include a timeline of major activities to be conducted over the period of time prior to the school's opening that will ensure a successful launch of the school

The timeline should address such aspects as facility, operations, budget, staff hiring, student recruitment and enrollment, curriculum, assessment, student support, and public and family engagement, ensuring that all are in place by the time school opens.

V. IP: MEASURABLE ANNUAL GOALS (NOT REQUIRED AT THE INNOVATION PROSPECTUS STAGE.)

IP: In order to assess the proposed school across multiple measures of school performance and student success, the innovation plan must include measurable annual goals in at least the following areas: (i) student attendance; (ii) student safety and discipline; (iii) student promotion and graduation and dropout rates; (iv) student achievement on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System MCAS; (v) progress in areas of academic underperformance; and (vi) progress among subgroups of students, including low-income students as defined by chapter 70, limited English-proficient students and students receiving special education; (vii) reduction of achievement gaps among different groups of students.

Goals that are particular to a school's Innovation Plan should also be included. Parent involvement or school climate goals are some possible examples. These measurable annual goals will provide the basis for renewing or modifying the innovation plan at the end of the period of authorization.

Please see the Measurable Annual Goals (MAGs) guidance document which contains recommendations for how to determine useful measures. Baseline data should also be included, as well as a timeline for when goals will be achieved. (***Not required at the Prospectus stage.***)

VI. REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS

The following attachments are required* and should be sequentially numbered and clearly referred to in the text. They do not count toward the page limit.

- ☐ Statements of commitment and resumes from each applicant group member.
- ☐ *For conversions:* Current School Improvement Plan.

This is based on a working document developed collaboratively by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Executive Office of Education, and the Center for Collaborative Education.
Updated October 2011

Additional Information:

M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 92 – Innovation Schools

Section 92. (a) An Innovation School shall be a public school, operating within a public school district, that is established for the purpose of improving school performance and student achievement through increased autonomy and flexibility. An Innovation School may be established as a new public school or as a conversion of an existing public school. A student who is enrolled in a school at the time it is established as an Innovation School shall retain the ability to remain enrolled in the school if the student chooses to do so.

(b) An Innovation School may establish an advisory board of trustees. An Innovation School shall have increased autonomy and flexibility in 1 or more of the following areas: (i) curriculum; (ii) budget; (iii) school schedule and calendar; (iv) staffing policies and procedures, including waivers from or modifications to, contracts or collective bargaining agreements; (v) school district policies and procedures; and (vi) professional development. An Innovation School shall receive each school year from the school committee the same per pupil allocation as any other district school receives. An Innovation School may retain any unused funds and use the funds in subsequent school years. An Innovation School may establish a non-profit organization that may, among other things, assist the school with fundraising. A district shall not reduce its funding to an Innovation School as a result of the school's fundraising activities.

(c) An Innovation School established under this section shall be authorized by the local school committee and shall operate according to an innovation plan, which shall articulate the areas of autonomy and flexibility under subsection (b). To the extent practicable, the innovation plan shall be based on student outcome data, including, but not limited to: (i) student achievement on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System; (ii) other measures of student achievement, approved by the commissioner, as appropriate; (iii) student promotion, graduation rates and dropout rates; (iv) achievement data for different subgroups of students, including low-income students as defined by chapter 70, limited English-proficient students and students receiving special education; and (v) student attendance, dismissal rates and exclusion rates.

An Innovation School shall operate in accordance with the law regulating other public schools, except as the law conflicts with this section or any innovation plans created thereunder.

(d) An Innovation School is a school in which: (i) faculty and leadership are primarily responsible for developing the innovation plan under which the school operates and leadership is responsible for meeting the terms of the innovation plan; or (ii) an external partner is primarily responsible for developing the innovation plan under which the school operates and the external partner is responsible for meeting the terms of the innovation plan.

(e) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit: (i) the establishment of an Innovation School as an academy within an existing public school; (ii) the establishment of an Innovation School serving students from 2 or more school districts; provided, however, that all of the provisions of this section are met by each school district; (iii) the simultaneous establishment of 2 or more Innovation Schools as an Innovation Schools Zone within a school district; or (iv) the establishment of an Innovation School as a virtual public school that provides instruction to students through

distance learning, including online learning programs and courses, subject to regulations adopted by the board of elementary and secondary education.

(f) The following shall be eligible applicants for the purposes of establishing an Innovation School: (i) parents; (ii) teachers; (iii) parent-teacher organizations; (iv) principals; (v) superintendents; (vi) school committees; (vii) teacher unions; (viii) colleges and universities; (ix) non-profit community-based organizations; (x) non-profit business or corporate entities; (xi) non-profit charter school operators; (xii) non-profit education management organizations; (xiii) educational collaboratives; (xiv) consortia of these groups; and (xv) non-profit entities authorized by the commissioner. Private and parochial schools shall not be eligible to operate an Innovation School.

(g) The local school committee, local teacher's union and superintendent of the district shall follow a process, consistent with this subsection and subsections (h) to (o), inclusive, for which an existing district school may be converted to an Innovation School or by which a new Innovation School may be established within the district. This process shall require that an eligible applicant proposing to establish an Innovation School prepare a prospectus regarding the proposed school. The prospectus shall include, but not be limited to, a description of: (i) whether the school will be a new school or a conversion of an existing school; (ii) if the school is a new school, the proposed location of the school; (iii) if the school is a conversion of an existing school, the school that is being proposed for conversion; (iv) the external partners, if any, that will be involved in the school; (v) the number of students the school is anticipated to serve and the number of staff expected to be employed at the school; (vi) the overall vision for the school, including improving school performance and student achievement; (vii) specific needs or challenges the school shall be designed to address; (viii) a preliminary assessment of the autonomy and flexibility under subsection (b) that the school will seek; (ix) why such flexibility is desirable to carry out the objectives of the school; (x) anticipated components of the school's innovation plan; (xi) a preliminary description of the process that shall be used to involve appropriate stakeholders in the development of the innovation plan; and (xii) a proposed timetable for development and establishment of the proposed school.

(h) Upon completion of the prospectus under subsection (g), an eligible applicant shall submit the prospectus to the superintendent, who shall within 30 days convene a screening committee consisting of the superintendent or a designee, a school committee member or a designee selected by the school committee and a representative from the leadership of the local teacher's union.

The screening committee shall review the prospectus for the purpose of determining whether the prospectus: (i) presents a sound and coherent plan for improving school performance and student achievement; (ii) supports or enhances existing educational efforts in the district; and (iii) reasonably can be expanded into a comprehensive innovation plan. In the case of a new school, the committee will prepare an impact statement describing how the new school will affect the children and faculty in the district. Within 30 days of receiving a prospectus, the screening committee shall decide, on the basis of a two-thirds vote, to accept or reject the prospectus, or return the prospectus to the eligible applicant for revisions. If a prospectus is rejected or returned, the screening committee shall submit a detailed explanation for the decision to the applicant. A prospectus that is rejected or returned may be revised and resubmitted for subsequent consideration.

(i) Upon the acceptance of a prospectus by the screening committee under subsection (h), the applicant shall form an innovation plan committee of not more than 11 individuals within 30 days. The purpose of the innovation plan committee shall be to: (i) develop the innovation plan described in subsection (c); (ii) assure that appropriate stakeholders are represented in the development of the

proposed Innovation School; and (iii) provide meaningful opportunities for the stakeholders to contribute to the development of such school. The size and composition of the innovation plan committee shall be determined by the applicant; provided, however, that the committee shall include: (i) the applicant; (ii) the superintendent or a designee; (iii) a school committee member or a designee; (iv) a parent who has 1 or more children enrolled in the school, or in the case of a new school, from the district; (v) a principal employed by the district; and (vi) 2 teachers employed by the district. The applicant shall select the parent from among nominees submitted by parent-teacher organizations in the district. If the district does not contain a parent-teacher organization or if the organization does not submit nominees, the applicant shall select the parent from among volunteers in the area or community the proposed school is expected to serve. The applicant shall select the principal and 1 teacher from among volunteers in the district and 1 teacher from among nominees submitted by the local teacher's union.

(j) Upon the formation of the innovation plan committee in subsection (i), the committee shall develop the innovation plan for the proposed Innovation School. The purpose of the innovation plan shall be to comprehensively articulate the areas of autonomy and flexibility under subsection (b) that the proposed school will use. The innovation plan shall include, but not be limited to: (i) a curriculum plan, which shall include a detailed description of the curriculum and related programs for the proposed school and how the curriculum is expected to improve school performance and student achievement; (ii) a budget plan, which shall include a detailed description of how funds shall be used differently in the proposed school to support school performance and student achievement; (iii) a school schedule plan, which shall include a detailed description of the ways, if any, the program or calendar of the proposed school will be enhanced or expanded; (iv) a staffing plan, which shall include a detailed description of how the school principal, administrators, faculty and staff will be recruited, employed, evaluated and compensated in the proposed school and any proposed waivers or modifications of collective bargaining agreements; (v) a policy and procedures plan, which shall include a detailed description of the unique operational policies and procedures to be used by the proposed school and how the procedures shall support school performance and student achievement; and (vi) a professional development plan, which shall include a detailed description of how the school may provide high-quality professional development to its administrators, teachers and staff.

In order to assess the proposed school across multiple measures of school performance and student success, the innovation plan shall include measurable annual goals including, but not limited to, the following: (i) student attendance; (ii) student safety and discipline; (iii) student promotion and graduation and dropout rates; (iv) student achievement on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System; (v) progress in areas of academic underperformance; and (vi) progress among subgroups of students, including low-income students as defined by chapter 70, limited English-proficient students and students receiving special education; (7) reduction of achievement gaps among different groups of students.

A majority vote of the innovation plan committee shall be required for approval of the innovation plan.

(k) The provisions of the collective bargaining agreements applicable to the administrators, teachers and staff in the school shall be considered to be in operation at an Innovation School, except to the extent the provisions are waived or modified under the innovation plan and such waivers or modifications are approved under subsections (l) and (m).

(l) In the case of a school conversion, upon completion of the innovation plan in subsection (j), , the applicant shall submit the innovation plan to teachers in the school that is proposed for conversion for approval by secret ballot within 30 days. A two-thirds vote of the teachers shall be required to approve the plan. Upon approval of an innovation plan by the applicable union members the plan shall, within 7 days, be submitted to the school committee. If a two-thirds vote is not achieved, the innovation plan committee may revise the innovation plan as necessary and submit the revised plan to the teachers for a subsequent vote.

In the case of a new school, upon the completion of the innovation plan in subsection (j), the applicant, a local union and the superintendent shall negotiate waivers or modifications to the applicable collective bargaining agreement necessary for the school to implement the innovation plan. Upon the conclusion of the negotiations, the innovation plan shall be submitted immediately to the school committee. If the negotiations have not resulted in an agreement within 40 days, either party may petition the division of labor relations for the selection of an arbitrator. The division shall select an arbitrator within 3 days of the petition from a list submitted by the parties. The arbitrator shall conduct a hearing within 14 days of the arbitrator's selection. The arbitrator shall consider the parties' positions and the needs of the students in the district. The arbitrator's decision shall be consistent with the contents of the innovation plan developed by the applicant. The arbitrator shall, within 14 days of the close of the hearing, submit a decision which shall be final and binding on the parties.

(m) Upon receipt of an innovation plan regarding an Innovation School, a school committee shall hold at least 1 public hearing on the innovation plan. After the public hearing, but not later than 60 days after the receipt of the innovation plan, the school committee shall, on the basis of the quality of the plan and in consideration of comments submitted by the public, undertake a final vote to authorize the Innovation School for a period of not more than 5 years, subject to subsection (n). Approval of the majority of the school committee as fully constituted shall be required to authorize an Innovation School. If the approval is not obtained, an innovation plan committee may revise the innovation plan and: (i) in the case of a new school, submit the revised plan to the school committee for a subsequent vote; or (ii) in the case of a conversion, submit the revised plan to the teachers in the school that is proposed for conversion for a vote, pursuant to subsection (l); provided, however, that the plan meets the requirements for approval under subsection (l), submit the revised plan to the school committee for a subsequent vote. A school committee shall vote on a revised plan submitted pursuant to this subsection within 60 days of the receipt of such plan and contract.

(n) All Innovation Schools authorized under subsection (m) shall be evaluated by the superintendent at least annually. The superintendent shall transmit the evaluation to the school committee and the commissioner of elementary and secondary education. The purpose of the evaluation shall be to determine whether the school has met the annual goals in its innovation plan and assess the implementation of the innovation plan at the school. If the school committee determines, on the advice of the superintendent, that the school has not met 1 or more goals in the innovation plan and that the failure to meet the goals may be corrected through reasonable modification of the plan, the school committee may amend the innovation plan as necessary. After the superintendent assesses the implementation of the innovation plan at the school, the school committee may, on the advice of the superintendent, amend the plan if the school committee determines that the amendment is necessary in view of subsequent changes in the district that affect 1 or more components of the plan, including, but not limited to, changes to contracts, collective bargaining agreements or school district policies; provided, however, that an amendment involving a subsequent change to a teacher contract shall first be approved by teachers at the school under the procedures in subsection (l).

If the school committee determines, on the advice of the superintendent, that the school has substantially failed to meet multiple goals in the innovation plan, the school committee may: (i) limit 1 or more components of the innovation plan; (ii) suspend 1 or more components of the innovation plan; or (iii) terminate the authorization of the school; provided, however, that the limitation or suspension shall not take place before the completion of the second full year of the operation of the school and the termination shall not take place before the completion of the third full year of the operation of the school.

(o) At the end of the period of authorization of an Innovation School approved under subsection (m), the leadership of the school may petition the school committee to extend the authorization of the school for an additional period of not more than 5 years. Before submitting the petition, the leadership of the school shall convene a selection of school stakeholders, including, but not limited to, administrators, teachers, other school staff, parents and external partners, as applicable, to discuss whether the innovation plan at the school requires revision and to solicit recommendations as to the potential revisions. After considering the recommendations of the stakeholder group, the leadership of the school and the applicable superintendent shall jointly update the innovation plan as necessary; provided, however, that a proposal regarding a new waiver or exemption from the local teacher's union contract shall be approved by teachers at the school, under subsection (I). Approval of the majority of the school committee as fully constituted shall be required to extend the period of authorization of an Innovation School. If the approval is not obtained, the leadership of the school and superintendent may jointly revise the innovation plan and submit the revised plan to the school committee for a subsequent vote. If the school committee does not extend the authorization of the school, the leadership of the school may seek the authorization from the board of elementary and secondary education. The board shall vote on the requested extension within 60 days of its receipt for approval of such extension.

(p) The commissioner of elementary and secondary education shall, to the extent practicable, be responsible for the following: (i) the provision of planning and implementation grants to eligible applicants to establish Innovation Schools; (ii) provision of technical assistance and support to eligible applicants; (iii) the collection and publication of data and research related to the Innovation Schools initiative; (iv) the collection and publication of data and research related to successful programs serving limited English-proficient students attending Innovation Schools; and (v) the collection and dissemination of best practices in Innovation Schools that may be adopted by other public schools. The board of elementary and secondary education shall promulgate regulations necessary to carry out this section. Annually, the commissioner shall report to the joint committee on education, the house and senate committees on ways and means, the speaker of the house of representatives and the senate president on the implementation and fiscal impact of this section.

INNOVATION SCHOOLS APPROVAL PROCESS

INNOVATION SCHOOLS Six Steps to Approval

1. The applicant prepares a prospectus and submits it to the superintendent.

The prospectus must include, but is not limited to, a description of:

- whether the school will be a new school or a conversion of an existing school;
- if the school is a new school, the proposed location of the school;
- if the school is a conversion of an existing school, the school that is being proposed for conversion;
- the external partners, if any, that will be involved in the school;
- the number of students the school is anticipated to serve and the number of staff expected to be employed at the school;
- the overall vision for the school, including improving school performance and student achievement;
- specific needs or challenges the school will be designed to address;
- a preliminary assessment of the autonomy and flexibility under subsection (b) that the school will seek;
- why the flexibility described under (viii) (above) is desirable to carry out the objectives of the school;
- anticipated components of the school's innovation plan;
- a preliminary description of the process that will be used to involve appropriate stakeholders in the development of the innovation plan; and
- a proposed timetable for development and establishment of the proposed school.

2. Within 30 days of receiving the prospectus, the superintendent convenes a screening committee, which includes: (i) the superintendent or his designee; (ii) a school committee member or a designee selected by the school committee; and (iii) a representative of leadership from the local teachers' union.

The screening committee will review the prospectus for the purpose of determining whether the prospectus: (i) presents a sound and coherent plan for improving school performance and student achievement; (ii) supports or enhances existing educational efforts in the district; and (iii) reasonably can be expanded into a comprehensive innovation plan. In the case of a new school, the committee will prepare an impact statement describing how the school will affect the students and educators in the district.

Within 30 days of receiving the prospectus, the screening committee will decide, on the basis of a 2/3 vote, to accept or reject the prospectus, or return the prospectus to the eligible applicant for revisions.

If a prospectus is rejected or returned, the screening committee will submit a detailed explanation for the decision to the applicant. A prospectus that is rejected or returned may be revised and resubmitted for subsequent consideration.

3. Within 30 days of screening committee approval, the applicant creates the innovation plan committee, on which there can be no more than 11 members.

The innovation plan committee must include, but is not limited to, the following individuals:

- the applicant;

- the superintendent or a designee;
- a school committee member or a designee;
- a parent who has 1 or more children enrolled in the school - in the case of a new school, a parent who has 1 or more children in the district (the applicant will select the parent from among nominees submitted by parent-teacher organizations in the district, but if the district does not contain a parent-teacher organization or if the organization does not submit nominees, the applicant selects the parent from among volunteers in the area or community the proposed school is expected to serve);
- a principal employed by the district (from among volunteers in the district); and
- 2 teachers employed by the district (1 of whom is selected from nominees submitted by the local teacher's union).

The purpose of the innovation plan committee is to: (i) develop the innovation plan; (ii) assure that appropriate stakeholders are represented in the development of the proposed Innovation School; and (iii) provide meaningful opportunities for the stakeholders to contribute to the development of the school.

4. The innovation plan committee develops and approves the innovation plan.

The purpose of the innovation plan is to comprehensively articulate the areas of autonomy and flexibility that the proposed school will use.

The innovation plan must include, but is not limited to:

- a curriculum plan, which includes a detailed description of the curriculum and related programs for the proposed school and how the curriculum is expected to improve school performance and student achievement;
- a budget plan, which includes a detailed description of how funds will be used differently in the proposed school to support school performance and student achievement;
- a school schedule plan, which includes a detailed description of the ways, if any, the program or calendar of the proposed school will be enhanced or expanded;
- a staffing plan, which includes a detailed description of how the school principal, administrators, faculty and staff will be recruited, employed, evaluated and compensated in the proposed school and any proposed waivers or modifications of collective bargaining agreements;
- a policy and procedures plan, which includes a detailed description of the unique operational policies and procedures to be used by the proposed school and how the procedures will support school performance and student achievement; and
- a professional development plan, which includes a detailed description of how the school and other partners will provide high-quality professional development to its administrators, teachers and staff.

In order to assess the proposed school across multiple measures of school performance and student success, the innovation plan must also include measurable annual goals including, but not limited to, the following:

- student attendance;
- student safety and discipline;
- student promotion and graduation and dropout rates;
- student achievement on the MCAS;
- progress in areas of academic underperformance;

- progress among subgroups of students, including low-income students as defined by Chapter 70, limited English-proficient students and students receiving special education; and
- reduction of achievement gaps among different groups of students.

A majority of the members of the innovation plan committee must approve the innovation plan in order to proceed.

If an innovation plan includes provisions that conflict with state laws or regulations governing other public schools, they must be approved by the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. If an innovation plan includes proposed waivers to Innovation Schools regulations that were adopted in July 2010 (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr48.html>), they must be approved by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. Detailed information about securing approval is available at the following website: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/news/news.aspx?id=5652>.

5. Teachers review and approve the innovation plan for a conversion school, or local stakeholders negotiate proposed waivers from or modifications to the collective bargaining agreement (if applicable) for a new school.

a. In the case of a conversion school, the applicant must submit the innovation plan to current teachers in the school for approval (by secret ballot) within 30 days of completing the innovation plan .

Approval by two-thirds of the current teachers is required to accept the innovation plan. The provisions of the collective bargaining agreements applicable to the administrators, teachers, and staff in the school will be considered to be in operation at an Innovation School unless waivers or modifications in the innovation plan are approved. Upon approval, the innovation plan must be submitted to the school committee within seven days for review.

If a two-thirds vote is not achieved, the innovation plan committee may revise the innovation plan as necessary and submit the revised plan to the current teachers for a subsequent vote.

b. In the case of a new school , the applicant, local union and superintendent are required to negotiate waivers or modifications to the applicable collective bargaining agreement that are necessary for the school to implement the innovation plan .

After the negotiations have been completed, the innovation plan will be submitted immediately to the school committee for review.

If the negotiations have not resulted in an agreement within 40 days, any of the parties can petition the Division of Labor Relations for the selection of an arbitrator. The Division will select an arbitrator within 3 days of the petition from a list submitted by the parties, who will conduct a hearing within 14 days of the arbitrator's selection. Within 14 days of the close of the hearing, the arbitrator will submit a decision which will be final and binding for all parties.

6. The school committee reviews the innovation plan and votes to authorize the establishment of the Innovation School.

After receiving an innovation plan, the school committee is required to hold at least 1 public hearing. After the hearing, but not later than 60 days after the receipt of the innovation plan, the school committee votes to authorize the Innovation School for a period of up to 5 years. Approval of the majority of the school committee as fully constituted is required to authorize an Innovation School.

If school committee approval is not obtained, an innovation plan committee may revise the innovation plan and:

- in the case of a new school, submit the revised plan to the school committee for a subsequent vote; or
- in the case of a conversion, submit the revised plan to the teachers in the school that is proposed for conversion for a vote, and then follow the procedures above.

The school committee is required to vote on the revised plan within 60 days of receipt.